CLAIMS:

1. A method, comprising:

selectively interrogating radio frequency identification tags in an interrogation corridor such that only those tags having a selected value in a specified memory location respond to the interrogation;

simultaneously receiving a response from all of the radio frequency identification tags having the selected value in the specified memory location; and

detecting at least one radio frequency identification tag having the selected value in the specified memory location in the interrogation corridor if at least a partial response is received.

2. The method of claim 1 further including indicating an alarm if a radio frequency identification tag having the specified value is detected.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of selectively interrogating further comprises commanding the radio frequency identification tags having the selected value in the specified memory location to respond to the interrogation at the same time.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of selectively interrogating further comprises sending an Application Family Identifier (AFI) command having an AFI value set to the selected value such that only those tags having the selected value in an AFI memory location respond to the interrogation.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein radio frequency identification tags are attached to articles in a protected facility, and wherein the AFI memory location is set to a checked-in value.

6. The method of claim 5 further comprising indicating an alarm when a patron attempts to remove an article having a radio frequency identification tag with the AFI memory location set to a checked-in value.

7. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of determining that no radio frequency identification tag having the selected value in the specified memory location is present in the interrogation corridor if a valid response is not received.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the radio frequency identification tags are attached to articles within a protected area, and wherein the specified value indicates whether the articles removal from the protected are is authorized.

9. The method of claim 8, further comprising indicating an alarm if an article having a radio frequency identification tag attached thereto having the selected value in the specified memory location is detected.

10. The method of claim 10 wherein the step of detecting at least one radio frequency identification tag comprises analyzing the received response and determining whether a valid start-of-frame (SOF) field was received.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising determining that no radio frequency identification tags having the selected value in the specified memory location are present in the interrogation corridor if a valid SOF is not received.

12. The method of claim 10, further comprising:

measuring a noise floor in the interrogation corridor when no radio frequency identification tags are present; and

comparing the received response with the noise floor to validate that the received possible response was produced by a checked-in radio frequency identification tag.

13. The method of claim 12 further comprising comparing the received response with the noise floor at the beginning of the response.

14. The method of claim 13 further comprising comparing the received possible response with the noise floor after the expected end of the response.

15. The method of claim 12 further comprising detecting presence of a radio frequency identification tag having the selected value in the specified memory location based on the comparison.

16. The method of claim 15 further comprising indicating an alarm of presence of a radio frequency identification tag having the selected value in the specified memory location is detected.

17. The method of claim 1 further comprising creating a key for a destroy command that when executed renders a radio frequency identification tag nonfunctional, wherein the radio frequency identification tag is affixed to an article and wherein the article has an associated Electronic Product Code, wherein creating the key further comprises:

generating a key value based on an Electronic Product Code;

storing the key value in a destroy memory location;

issuing a destroy command and transmitting therewith an unlock value;

comparing the unlock value with the stored key value; and

executing the destroy command if the unlock value equals the stored key value.

18. A method, comprising:

interrogating radio frequency identification tags in an interrogation corridor to identify presence of those tags having a selected value in a specified memory location;

simultaneously receiving a response from all of the radio frequency identification tags in the interrogation corridor;

detecting a collision in at least one bit of the specified memory location; and

detecting at least one radio frequency identification tag having the selected value in the specified memory location in the interrogation corridor if a collision is detected.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the step of detecting a collision further comprises detecting a collision in one bit of the specified memory location.

20. The method of claim 18 further comprising, if no collision is detected, determining whether the received response indicates that the specified memory location contains the selected value.

21. The method of claim 20 further comprising detecting at least one radio frequency identification tag having the selected value in the selected memory location in the interrogation corridor if the received response indicates that the specified memory location contains the selected value.

22. The method of claim 21 further comprising determining that no radio frequency identification tag having the selected value in the selected memory location are present in the interrogation corridor if the received response indicates that the specified memory location does not contain the selected value.

23. A computer-readable medium comprising instructions to cause a processor to:

selectively interrogate radio frequency identification tags in an interrogation corridor such that only those tags having a selected value in a specified memory location respond to the interrogation;

simultaneously receive a response from all of the radio frequency identification tags having the selected value in the specified memory location; and

detect at least one radio frequency identification tag having the selected value in the specified memory location in the interrogation corridor if at least a partial response is received.

24. The computer readable medium of claim 23 further comprising instructions to cause a processor to indicate an alarm if a radio frequency identification tag having the specified value is detected.

25. The computer readable medium of claim 23 further comprising instructions to cause a processor to command the radio frequency identification tags having the selected value in the specified memory location to respond to the interrogation at the same time.

26. The computer readable medium of claim 23 further comprising instructions to cause a processor to determine that no radio frequency identification tag having the selected value in the specified memory location is present in the interrogation corridor is a valid response is not received.

27. The computer readable medium of claim 23 wherein the radio frequency identification tags are attached to articles within a protected area, and wherein the specified value indicates whether the articles removal from the protected are is authorized.

28. The computer readable medium of claim 27 further comprising instructions to cause a processor to indicate an alarm if an article having a radio frequency identification tag attached thereto having the selected value in the specified memory location is detected.

29. The computer readable medium of claim 25 further comprising instructions to cause a processor to validate the received response.

30. The computer readable medium of claim 29 further comprising instructions to cause a processor to analyze the received response and determine whether a valid start-of-frame (SOF) field was received.

31. A method comprising:

detecting a collision between communications from radio frequency identification tags in an interrogation corridor; and

generating an alarm upon detecting the collision to indicate that an unauthorized article is present within the interrogation corridor.

32. A method comprising:

receiving a partial response from a radio frequency identification tag in an interrogation corridor; and

generating an alarm upon receiving the partial response to indicate that an unauthorized article is present within the interrogation corridor.

33. The method of claim 32, where the partial response comprises a start of frame (SOF).

34. The method of claim 32, further comprising:

measuring a noise floor in the interrogation corridor prior to receiving the partial response;

comparing the received partial response with the noise floor; and

selectively generating the alarm based on the comparison.